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Asset plans bring budget considerations to council

by NICK BERNARD
Times Staff

Minden Hills council heard a number of delegations ahead of continued deliberations for the 2022 budget. While none of the reports required any immediate action from council, the information presented a number of serious financial considerations for councillors to ponder.

Nick Larson of the Ontario Clean Water Agency presented a summary of Minden's recently-drafted asset management plan for the township's water and wastewater infrastructure. The plan covers almost 400 assets dedicated to water management, including treatment and distribution.

Larson said having an asset management plan, required by the Ontario government, helps council and the public understand how the township spends its money, especially for critical infrastructure.

"I do think even without a regulatory requirement, that a nice, efficient way of doing an asset management plan lets a community understand the value of what you get for your infrastructure investment," Larson said. "So we can say, here's how much money we're planning to spend, and then really understanding what that's going to get us in terms of the performance of our infrastructure."

According to the analysis, each asset is rated into three performance categories: Good, see HALF page 3



Walk this way

Rick Whittaker guides snowshoers on a walk through Snowdon Park on Jan 31. The Township of Minden Hills is hosting two additional snowshoeing events through February. See more photos on Page 17. /NICK BERNARD Staff

County plans for community safety, well-being

by STEPHEN PETRICK
Special to the Times

New data showing high poverty and unemployment rates, amid a population growth and a housing crunch, shed light on the steep challenges Haliburton County will face as it

embarks on a plan to address homelessness, poverty, mental health issues and health care access.

A trove of statistics were unveiled at a special meeting of Haliburton County council on Jan. 26 to discuss the county's progress on a community safety and well-being plan.

The report, delivered by Lauren Wyman of

StrategyCorp, a firm hired to gather data and speak to groups about the plan, showed several concerning trends.

Among the notable statistics unveiled was that the unemployment rate in the county has fluctuated around two points above the provincial average of 7.4 per cent, at 9.6 per cent.

see PLAN page 3



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Emergency department staffing situation ‘remains precarious’

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

The following are brief reports from the Haliburton Highlands Health Services board meeting held virtually on Jan. 27.

HHHS CEO and president Carolyn Plummer said that while the area's two emergency departments have been staffed with the HHHS nursing team and help of agency nursing staff – about eight full-time equivalent staff – “the situation remains precarious.”

She said at this point, coverage is in place until the month of March.

“The continual onboarding of new agency staff is not something that can be sustained over a long period of time; recruiting permanent staff continues to be critical, as does investing in the retention of our current staff,” said Plummer in her CEO report, noting a variety of both recruitment and retention strategies are underway.

Plummer said HHHS continues to face physician shortages, including a decline in available emergency department physician coverage.

“We recognize that despite our best efforts and the collaborative work we are doing with Ontario Health East and other partners, recruitment will continue to be a challenge as healthcare organizations across the province are engaged in similar recruitment activities,” reads her report. “As a result, we are also continuing to engage in data analysis and planning discussions for potential service reductions; more information about this will be available in the coming weeks.”

Deficit increases but financial report ‘encouraging’

David O’Brien, board vice-chair and chair of the finance committee, said the results of the financial report from October and November were more “encouraging,” than those reported up to September.

Currently the organization is facing a \$633,000 deficit, compared to \$613,000 as reported in December.

“So it hasn’t gotten any worse, other than for about \$20,000 which is the first time that’s happened in a long time,” he told the board. “Normally this would have increased by \$100,000 plus per month, so we could have expected somewhere in the \$830,000 range. So, good work on that ... that we’ve got that mitigated, but we still have a \$633,000 deficit.”

O’Brien said the significant factors contributing to that deficit remain mostly from ongoing staffing pressures – from agency work to overtime and sick time – and total lost revenue from non-Ministry of Health sources.

“It’s assumed that the additional costs incurred because of the pandemic will be offset with government funding, and we continue to review all cost areas to ensure that we are optimizing the amount of pandemic expenses to be recovered,” he said. “That’s a very critical component because we, like all other hospitals, are experiencing heavy increases to our operating bottom line because of COVID, and we’re tracking these numbers very carefully.”

O’Brien said a cash deficit had been largely eliminated because of some funding from the province for COVID-19 expense claims from the end of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, and first quarter of the current fiscal year.

He thanked all staff, residents, clients and patients.

“Everybody’s doing a marvellous job, we should be standing up proud and holding our head high that we’ve done what



The HHHS Board of Directors meeting was held virtually on Jan. 27. Pictured here are some members who took part in the afternoon meeting. /Screenshot

we’ve been able to do with very little resources,” he said.

Board plans to advocate for nurses, staff, on Bill 124

Bill 124, *Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act*, 2019, generally caps annual salary increases to one per cent for unionized and non-unionized employees in the public sector, including employees of the provincial government, crown agencies, school boards, universities and colleges, hospitals, non-profit long-term care homes, children’s aid societies, social service agencies and electricity and energy sectors.

Outside of his report, O’Brien expressed his concern about the impact of the legislation on those working in the healthcare sector, especially as they’ve worked through the pandemic.

“We know that funding for healthcare has been cut back dramatically over many years, and I’m not pointing the finger at any one government and that has gone back for many, many years,” he said. “The consequence of that of course is that when COVID came along we were ill-prepared to deal with it from an operational and staffing point of view. But, in the end it’s the health sector that rose up and put the boots on the ground and were available to beat this COVID to the point that we might get out of it in the foreseeable future. And without that commitment from staff we probably wouldn’t be where we are today, well on the way to recovery.”

“It’s caused just immeasurable personal and social upheaval within the health profession, both on a personal basis of the employees and the ability of all hospitals and other health organizations to be able to provide service,” said O’Brien.

He said the board should express support for nurses and all other staff affected by the piece of legislation.

“I personally think that this bill is wrong. I don’t think it should be applicable to our sector after all we’ve done,” he said, noting HHHS shouldn’t have the kind of deficit he spoke to earlier, “because the money should be coming as quickly as we put the money out the door, because we’re put-

ting the money out the door on behalf of the government. And part of that cost is providing the kind of services and support we give to our staff.”

Board chair Jan Walker asked that the board’s commitment to looking at a plan to advocate for staff be added to the minutes.

“I think you have full support on that particular item,” she said.

HHHS Foundation celebrates Magic of Giving

Lisa Tompkins, executive director of the HHHS Foundation, spoke to the record results of the Magic of Giving campaign.

“We exceeded last year’s results by almost 50 per cent for a total raised of \$243,910,” she said. “That’s of course thanks to the extraordinary generosity of some 800 donors across the county and well beyond who made very clear their support of HHHS and healthcare in our community.”

Funds raised supported priority capital equipment including mobile workstations-on-wheels for the new clinical information system and state-of-the-art nurse call bell systems for Highland Wood and Hyland Crest long term care homes. Additionally, it contributed to community support service programs, providing 993 meals for the Meals on Wheels program and 282 trips for medically-required transportation.

“Overall a very successful campaign this year,” said Tompkins. “We’re very grateful to the generosity of so many who made it very clear that healthcare is a high priority for them and our local healthcare matters.”

Public consultation open for LTC legislation proposed changes

Proposed regulations under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act*, 2021 have now been posted for public consultation by the provincial government. The proposed Phase 1 of the regulation is posted for consultation until Feb. 17 at www.ontario-canada.com/registry/.

STILL STANDING

The Minden episode of *Still Standing* will be broadcast on Feb. 23, rather than the original broadcast date of Feb. 2. Watch it on CBC at 8 p.m. or via CBC GEM, where it will be available for viewing if you miss the live broadcast.



Tilbury man, 30, dies in Minden worksite incident

A 30-year-old Tilbury man died after a fall from a telecommunications tower at a worksite in Minden Hills last week.

At approximately 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 26, Haliburton Highlands OPP were contacted by Haliburton County Paramedic Services regarding a worker who had fallen from a telecommunications tower on Davis Lake Road.

The initial investigation by OPP indicated that workers were onsite working on a tower that morning when one of the workers fell. He was subsequently pronounced dead at the scene.

Police have identified the deceased as 30-year-old Jacob

Lundrigan of Tilbury.

Both the federal and provincial ministries of labour have been notified and are investigating. The Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, OPP Forensic Identification Unit and the Haliburton Highlands OPP Crime Unit are assisting with the investigation.

Haliburton Highlands OPP is requesting anyone with information about the incident to call 1-888-310-1122 or (705) 286-1431. Should you wish to remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or submit a secure webtip at <https://www.khcrimestoppers.com/>.

Half of Minden's roads require maintenance over next decade

from page 1

Fair, and Poor. Currently, 13 per cent of the township's water assets fall into the Poor – or, requiring treatment or spending – category. Larson says proactive spending would also be needed to keep assets that perform fairly – working, with some deficiencies – from falling into the poor category.

"It is inevitable that, over time, all [fair performance] becomes [poor performance]," Larson said, "That's just the nature of infrastructure."

The total cost for the repair or replacement of the township's water infrastructure is over \$37.1 million. For assets in the poor performance category, the cost is just under \$4.8 million.

Currently, a rate study is underway, which will examine ways to establish rate increases to fund the plan's forecasted expenditures. The study will consider the impacts of inflation, new development from a growing cus-

tomers base, and money the township already has available in order to dictate where those increases happen.

A report on that study is expected, Larson says, within weeks.

Larson's presentation and a copy of Minden's 2021 Asset Management Plan for Water and Wastewater Systems is available to view at mindenhills.civicweb.net.

Road needs for the next decade

Michael Cullip and Mat MacLean from Tatham Engineering presented the Road Needs Study to council, following up on a similar report they presented when they were first retained by council in 2018.

"What we've done is look at what the different improvement strategies are," Cullip said. According to the report, a bulk of those maintenance costs go toward either resurfac-

ing certain roads, or completely reconstructing them.

According to Cullip, a little under half of Minden's 278 kilometers of road will require maintenance over the next decade, totalling \$29.9 million dollars, with the report itself assuming a budget of \$3 million year over year.

"This is a beginning of a very long process," Mayor Brent Devolin said to Cullip following his presentation. "It gives us some things to wrap our heads around, not only this year, but in the years to come."

Other considerations still need to be made

In terms of the township's asset management plans overall, including for roads, Mayor Brent Devolin described the importance of allowing space in the budget for maintaining infrastructure, especially com-

ing out of the pandemic.

"In the post-COVID, we have housing and healthcare at the top of the pyramid," Devolin said. "But I think that as all of this asset management rolls out, infrastructure has never come off the top five or ten [priorities for the township], but I think it's going to jump to the top."

Chief Administrative Officer Trisha McKibbin also reminded council of the full range of asset management plans they have yet to hear.

"We're just talking about roads [and water and wastewater management] at this point," McKibbin said. "So when we look at asset management, we have to fit these pieces of the puzzle into the bigger discussion as well ... We're going to be taking these pieces, putting them together, because we can't be looking at them all in isolation. If we focus just on one, everything else is going to deteriorate"

Plan to support community 'opens up the conversation'

from page 1

Also Haliburton County has a child poverty rate of 23 per cent and an overall poverty rate of 17.2 per cent.

"The persisting poverty rates in the county are attributed in part to low, non-living wage incomes, low-paying seasonal work and to the high number of pensioners," the report said.

Also, "in 2019, 13.5 per cent of households in Haliburton County and Kawartha Lakes faced food access challenges (e.g. not having enough to eat, limited access to quality foods, or worries about having enough to eat) due to financial challenges."

On education, the report noted that 16.1 per cent of county residents do not have a high school diploma. And the rate of those aged 25 to 64 with post-secondary education is 55.6 per cent, down from the provincial rate of 67 per cent.

The report noted that Haliburton County, between 2011 and 2016, experienced a population growth rate of 5.9 per cent, a rate above the provincial average of 4.6 per cent.

This growth adds to housing challenges. The report said, "Housing stock is significantly low in the county, posing challenges for residents across income levels. There is a general lack of housing available across the continuum. 98.5 per cent of residents in the county reside in homes that are considered suitable – meaning that there are enough bedrooms for each dweller. While housing conditions may be considered suitable in terms of size, anecdotal evidence from service providers indicates that housing conditions, regardless of size, may be substandard."

On crime, the report said, "between 2018 and 2020, violation against person crimes decreased by seven per cent from 150 to 140; whereas violation of property crimes increased by 11 per cent from 270 to 303 incidents. From 2017-2020 there was a slight uptick in 911 calls related to social disorder (e.g., domestic disputes, unwanted persons, keep the peace, and trespassing) There was a single reported hate crime in the county in 2020."

The report was delivered to set in motion a plan to have groups work together to address

these issues.

Strategy Corp proposed 12 goals for the county to adopt. They were to:

- align policy priorities across existing programs,
- develop wraparound support for community members struggling to access housing,
- continue to support service provider collaboration and information sharing,
- elevate existing service integration and information sharing efforts to alleviate poverty,
- identify innovative opportunities to address food insecurity,
- increase access to, and awareness of, mental health and addiction support services,
- co-design and develop experience-based mental health and addiction and substance use support services and programs,
- improve education, awareness, and information sharing on substance use and addiction, harm reduction, and mental health,
- increase awareness on the importance of physical movement and increase access to active transportation as a central mode of mobility,
- develop a Health Equity Working Group

to support equal access to health across priority groups such as low-income, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and seniors,

- and enhance and expand service scope of virtual care for health and mental health.

Haliburton County councillors voted to receive the report. A second resolution that passed directed county staff to distribute the report to the four local municipalities and ask for their endorsement of a seven-member board that will begin working to address these issues.

Earlier in the presentation Wyman said that a key part of the process moving forward is to have different agencies that work on these issues communicate with each other and share ideas.

"One of the greatest values of this plan is its ability to break down silos, share data, create change ... to develop a plan that effectively supports this community," she said. "It opens up the conversation between service providers where those conversations don't always exist."



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(VIRTUAL) COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted virtually via web conference meetings, until further notice. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The schedule of upcoming meetings are:

February 10 – Regular Council Meeting
February 24 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link available on the township website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/ or by using the direct link provided in the notice. Meeting agendas are not displayed during the meeting, please download by visiting our website at www.mindenhills.ca/council/.

Please note the live-stream link provided for each meeting will only be activated while Council is in session.

SNOW REMOVAL

Pushing snow across roads and streets is not only a safety hazard; it is also against the law. The Ontario Traffic Act states: No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing to do so from the Ministry or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road.
R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 181.

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TAX INFORMATION

Request for Tax Statements for Income Tax purposes can be mailed or placed in the drop box. Requests should include your name, roll number, mailing address, email address and a phone number. Requests must be accompanied by a cheque for the applicable fee of \$10.00, for **each** property roll. The 2022 Interim Tax Bills will be mailed the last week of February and installments will be due in March and May.

HALIBURTON COUNTY WASTE WIZARD

Have you downloaded the Waste Wizard Mobile App from the app store on your Android or iOS mobile device to search disposal options, receive reminders about upcoming events and get notified about unexpected waste site closures? In your app store, search "Haliburton County Waste App" and download and choose Minden Hills as your community.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

To avoid frostbite and hypothermia before you venture outside be sure to check the temperature and limit your time outside if it's very cold, wet or windy. Bundle up in several layers of loose clothing, wear mittens rather than gloves, cover your head and ears with a warm hat and wear socks that keep your feet warm and dry.



Incidence rate begins to plateau: MOH

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

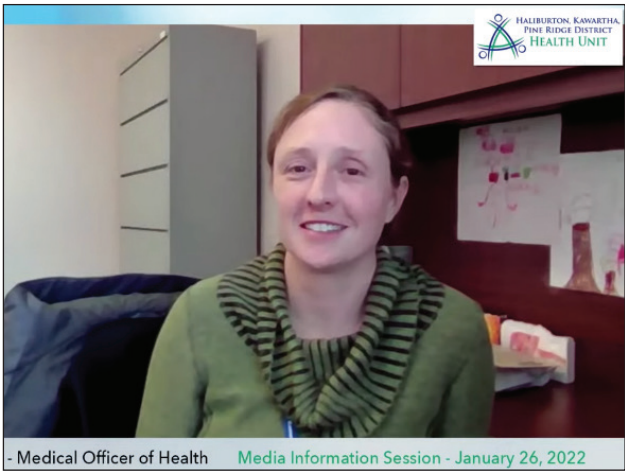
The following are brief reports from a Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit press conference held virtually Jan. 26 with medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking.

While Bocking usually starts the session noting the total number of cases to date during the pandemic, last week's meeting was different.

"I'm not actually going to do that today, because we know that the number on our dashboard of the confirmed number of cases really is no longer an accurate reflection of what the activity of COVID-19 is in the community," said Bocking.

Bocking said the health unit was still sharing the information, and that higher numbers were still being recorded meaning there is ongoing COVID-19 transmission and infection happening in the area.

The incidence rate, a reflection of by-population number, has started to plateau. At the peak of cases in the HKPRD region, there were above 500 cases per 100,000. The last week prior to the meeting, though an underestimate still due to limited testing, the incidence rate has been stabilizing at 250 cases per 100,000 which is still much higher activity then had



Dr. Natalie Bocking, medical officer of health, speaks to media in a weekly Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit media briefing, held Jan. 26. /Screenshot

generally been seen previously. Prior to the highly contagious Omicron variant, the region was seeing five to six cases per 100,000. At the peak of the third wave last spring and early summer, there were 90 cases per 100,000.

Test positivity has been about the same, around 12 to 13 per cent, which Bocking said is "much better" than 23 per cent a few weeks ago, but much higher than the two to three per cent being seen prior to the Omicron wave.

Measures preventing severity of illness a 'positive light'

Looking at summarized data since Jan. 1, Bocking said since the beginning of the year the health unit's region has seen 39 admissions to hospital, 12 admissions to ICU and nine deaths from COVID-19.

"This is certainly the highest number of hospital admissions and ICU admissions that we've seen throughout the pandemic," she noted. As of the time of the briefing, 20 residents across the region had been admitted to hospital with 10 in the ICU.

"What's different about the Omicron wave compared to say the first wave of the pandemic, was [during] the first wave of the pandemic, we didn't have any vaccines and we found out that our most elderly residents, especially those in LTC homes and retirement homes were significantly impacted, with some homes seeing very high mortality with COVID-19," said Bocking.

Of the nine deaths since Jan. 1, four of those are associated with residents of LTC.

"So it's not that Omicron is a totally mild illness, it can cause severe illness, but we have other measures in place that are also helping to prevent that same severity of illness and death that we saw with the first wave of the pandemic," Bocking said. "I think that's a positive light throughout all of this."

Among the 39 residents admitted to hospitals since Jan. 1, 49 per cent, or almost half of those individuals, had not received any vaccinations, representing almost 50 per cent of

hospital admissions, Bocking said. Only 10 - 15 per cent of the population is not vaccinated, she said, and there is a higher risk of needing admission to hospital for those unvaccinated.

More hospital admissions among older age groups

Statistics looking at hospital admissions show 53 per cent associated with residents 70 and older.

Two hospital admissions occurred for those under the age of 20 - one under 10-years-old and one in the age group of 11 to 20.

"It's uncommon for this region, we have not had many pediatric hospitalizations throughout the pandemic, and there's certainly no evidence that this is causing more severe illness in children but if we do the math, if there's more infection, even if it's a relatively rare event it might happen more often with Omicron," Bocking said.

In terms of ICU admissions, of those 12 individuals, 67 per cent were unvaccinated and 41 per cent over the age 70 and above. The vast majority were older than 60.

Vaccination rates

Bocking said vaccination continues to be one of the most important tools available to try to blunt the impact of Omicron on residents and hospitals.

Of those 70 and older, 79 per cent have received their booster. Of those 50 and older, 66 per cent of people have received their third dose. Of those 18 and older, 53.6 per cent have received their booster dose.

For kids aged five to 11, who became eligible for vaccinations at the beginning of December, 44.8 per cent have received their first dose.

Mental health during the fifth wave

"We know that this pandemic has had so many negative impacts on all facets of people's lives contributing to challenges with mental wellness, mental health, and then an increase in mental health conditions across our communities," said Bocking.

"I think one of the things that is most important about 'Let's Talk' day, is acknowledging the stigma with mental health conditions, talking about the stigma associated with mental health conditions and then helping hopefully to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health conditions."

Bocking said it is known that stigma contributes significantly to ongoing suffering by individuals with mental health conditions.

"All of us have a role to play in creating the space for not just individuals impacted by their own mental health condition, but by family members, friends, community members, to create that space where they feel safe and welcome and acknowledged and don't have the fear associated with sharing their challenges associated with mental health," she said. "I think the most important thing we can all be doing right now is continue to be kind to each other, to acknowledge that we all have challenges in many different areas of our lives, and that we're all doing the best that we can to continue to get through this pandemic."

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COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by County							
County	Current Cases Not Resolved	Current Probable Cases	Confirmed Cases (Total to date)	Confirmed Cases Resolved (Total to date)	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Confirmed Deaths (Total to date)	Probable Deaths (Total to date)
Haliburton	11	0	339	327	5	1	0
Kawartha Lakes	289	2	3,057	2,715	89	53	13
Northumberland	79	2	2,823	2,723	72	21	0
Pending Information	3	0	25	22	0	0	0
Total	382	4	6,244	5,787	166	75	13

Health unit's Jan. 31 update

Nine new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County were reported on Jan. 31, in an update from the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit that includes information from Jan. 28. In City of Kawartha Lakes, 77 cases were confirmed, and 28 new cases were confirmed in Northumberland County. An outbreak at Extendicare long-term care home in Haliburton was reported on Jan. 28. The health unit advises these case numbers are an underestimate of community spread as only individuals who live and work in high-risk settings have access to tests./Screenshot from HKPRD website

TLDSB director speaks to keeping parents informed

by **NICK BERNARD**
Times Staff

Trillium Lakelands District School Board director Wes Hahn observed a mood of fatigue tinged with hope during his director's update at the board's regular meeting on Jan. 25.

"As we enter the third calendar year of this pandemic, people are tired. Families are tired, staff are tired," he said, expressing his gratitude for teachers, staff, and families during the transition back to in-person learning. "But you know, out in a school today and seeing the energy ... there's a lot of positive feelings about where we're going."

He also outlined how the board was keeping parents in the loop, now that COVID testing and reporting falls on the board's shoulders.

"Daily reporting of attendance occurs from our schools into the [Ontario government's] absentee reporting tool, and then the following day, that information is uploaded and posted in the ministry site," Hahn explained. He also reiterated that the reported absentee data encompass both student and staff absences, as well as absences for reasons unrelated to COVID-19.

Currently, the threshold for class and school closures is an absentee rate of 30 per cent, a guideline Hahn says has been used by public health units for the monitoring of other communicable diseases.

"I think we have created a situation where we are creating confidence," Hahn said.

Staff have also been supplied with PPE, and a screening process for students is in

place. HEPA air filters have also been delivered to all schools, which Hahn says puts the board well within Ministry guidelines for air filtration.

Hahn also said that the Ontario government's COVID-19 screener, in combination with the rapid antigen testing kits that students receive through the board, has been helpful for students and staff to gauge their safety in the school building.

"I'm sure [testing kits], along with our screener has helped really ... inform them before they enter the building the next day, whether they've tested positive or whether the screener has made them aware that they could be at risk, and not to enter the building," Hahn explained.

The board will also be hosting vaccination clinics in some schools for students aged 5 to 11, with parent permission. Dates for those clinics are still to be announced.

Students and staff can use the Ontario government's COVID-19 screening tool at covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/

The province's school absentee data is updated daily, and can be found at www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-school-closures-and-absenteeism

Strategic plan 2022-2027 released to a warm reception

Director Hahn presented the TLDSB's 2022-2027 strategic plan to the board. In his presentation, he described collaborating with staff, students, parents, and community partners to get their impressions on what the board's priorities should be over the next five

years.

"We really looked at some guiding principles that would help us engage our stakeholders and our staff and our students," Hahn said, describing the plan's two main goals of supporting meaningful learning, and creating learning spaces that foster equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Each goal is presented with commitments the board intends to make to students, staff, and the community, framed around statements that say "we will."

"They're very powerful," Hahn said of that particular phrasing. "And we believe they're commitment statements that we need to abide by ... we think this is an important

part of this plan that holds us accountable."

A motion to pass the plan was swiftly voted into approval by board trustees, with trustee Judy Saunders praising the document for its plain but engaging language.

"[The plan] is something that is actually engaging – at least I find it engaging," she said, describing her impressions of the plan. "The simple, clean lines of this document, and the simple, unpointed message that the document is putting out there."

The TLDSB's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan is available to view at www.tldsb.ca/board/strategic-directions/



January winds down

A peaceful spot with a look at Canning Lake. /Photo by SUE TIFFIN

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Sharing is not always caring

LAST WEEK, someone who works in media elsewhere in the province told me that as the truck convoy filled the streets, so too did angry, misinformed emails in their inbox.

The emails all stated the same thing, more or less – some of them verbatim to the ones before, many of them outraged – noting they had heard this person tell public in an on-air broadcast that the truck convoy was made up of “terrorists,” and that they should be ashamed of themselves.

This person who received an unexpected bombardment of emails, though, isn’t a part of on-air broadcasts in any capacity. So, they responded to each one, gently refuting that allegation, and offering to go over the broadcast that had run if need be. Most of the followup emails to that response were calmer, apologetic, and led to an answer: someone, in a group of about 65,000 people, in a completely different province, had posted what they thought they’d heard, included an email address, and asked others in the group to “blast” their inbox.

It was a huge waste of time and energy for everyone. In other cases, it can be dangerous such as when people are doxxed – their personal contact or home address shared online.

Whether misinformation – the unintentional spread of inaccurate information, or disinformation – the intentional spread of inaccurate information to manipulate others – it’s spreading as quickly as Omicron, and it’s exhausting.

While we’ve noted it before in this paper, it’s worth noting again, because we’re all capable of reading something, feeling emotional and sharing it before thinking critically about the source

from which we received it.

Here’s what to remember about how to spot potentially fake news, from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions:

- “Consider the source: Is there an author? Check out their credentials on relevant issues.

- Read beyond: Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What’s the whole story?

- Supporting sources?: Click on links or check with official sources. Do they support the story?

- Do others agree?: Are any other sites reporting this? What sources are they citing?

- Is it a joke?: If it’s too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the source to be sure.

- Check your biases: Consider if your own beliefs or concerns could affect your judgement.

- Ask the experts: Ask a librarian, [Editor’s note: or a reputable journalist!] or consult a fact-checking site, or an official source

**SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

like the WHO [or the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit].

- Look before you share: Don’t share posts or stories that you haven’t checked out first.”

This type of misinformation and disinformation doesn’t just show up in our inbox or on our social media feeds but in traditional news media, in books and perhaps even around our family dinner table or in a conversation with our neighbour.

Let’s work together to remind ourselves to pause before sharing, think before reacting and take another look at the original source, or for a second reliable source before spreading something that’s more unhelpful than not.

Kwarky



*“I have a premonition that we’ll die,
so let’s keep it platonic.”*

The bark of snowshoeing

SNOWSHOEING IS arguably the quietest, most poetic, and exhilarating of all winter activities. At least that’s what the marketing people want you to believe.

My experience says otherwise, however. Sure, it is a great excuse to enjoy the winter woods and get some much-needed fresh air and exercise. And, yes, nothing makes you appreciate a warm fire and a hot chocolate more than a morning of snowshoeing.

But there is a dark side to snowshoeing too. I’m referring to something few people speak of, and then only in hushed whispers. I’m talking about snowshoeing with your dog.

You’d think this would be one of those wholesome experiences an entire Disney movie could be based on. Of course, you’d be wrong.

For a dog’s sole purpose in winter is to step on, and often hitch a ride on, the back of your snowshoes – and generally at the most inopportune times too. For instance, while breaking an uphill section of trail. Clearly, this is a deterrent to fully enjoying any snowshoeing outing – particularly if your dog is a Great Dane.

As you would expect, having a dog on board makes the snowshoer suddenly wonder why one of his legs is not working as it should. Luckily after 20 or so steps of dragging a canine laden snowshoe, most of us realize there is a freeloader sitting on our snowshoe.

The following five minutes will then be spent trying to command, beg, threaten, cajole or bribe your dog to get off the snowshoe. Unfortunately, most dogs have selective hearing and know a good thing when they are onto it.

All this is to say, getting a dog off of

your snowshoe is never an easy thing. Before the dog leaves the snowshoe in question you will have tried issuing a firm verbal command, using a hand signal, blowing on a whistle, asking nicely, yelling, cajoling, bribing, threatening violence, vowing to withhold affection, and begging. In a best-case scenario, this will cause your dog to step off of one snowshoe and hop onto the other.

It’s usually at that point that my dog barks at me. It’s her command for me to continue on so she can continue to enjoy the ride. That’s typical of every dog I have ever owned.

Experience has shown me that this is something you cannot give into. Because if you just give up and move obediently whenever the dog barks, you are no longer in charge and the dog has won. That’s why I ignore the barking and only move when I am good and ready. This allows me to hold my head up high as I give my dog a free ride up the hill.

Frankly, I cannot help but think that this is canine revenge for all the sleighs we’ve made their kind pull. The part that annoys me most is right at the end of the excursion, when you catch up to that one person in the group who thinks your dog is cute. That person will invariably note that you look exhausted while your dog looks fresh as a daisy.

The best thing to do at that point is to agree and politely ask if they would mind snowshoeing a quick circuit with your dog – just to exercise her a bit more.

When they return a short while later your dog will still look fresh as a daisy – although it will probably have a raspy voice from barking too many commands.

**STEVE GALEA**
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

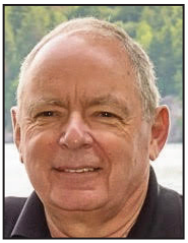
Following a convoy of courage

I AM PROUD to report that I was one of the journalists covering that heroic highway convoy. It was a courageous event that demonstrated the strength of human spirit.

It happened without me being verbally abused, or spat upon. Reporters were treated with respect.

As it crossed the country, gaining cheering supporters along the roadsides, I realized this was a powerful story that could change Canada and Canadians. It changed me.

I'm not talking about the truck convoy that travelled to Ottawa to protest health restrictions to control the COVID-19 pandemic that has killed six million people worldwide.



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

The convoy I covered was 42 years ago when a 22-year-old curly-haired kid with an artificial leg decided to run coast to coast to raise awareness and money for cancer research.

In 1977, Terry Fox, a Port Coquitlam, B.C. university student, was diagnosed with cancer. His right leg was amputated. Doctors told him that medical advances gave him a 50 per cent chance of survival, up from 15 per cent because of research.

Fox endured 16 months of chemotherapy and practised running on the artificial leg. He ran with difficulty but determined he would run a Marathon of Hope to collect money for more cancer research.

On April 12, 1980 he dipped a leg into the Atlantic Ocean near St. John's, Newfoundland, then began running west toward the Pacific.

The pain never slowed the odd hip-hop gait that carried him roughly 42 kilometres (26 miles) a day. Until it did, on the eastern outskirts of Thunder Bay. An ambulance carried him to hospital where he learned the cancer had spread to his lungs.

Terry Fox ran 5,373 kilometres (3,339 miles) in 143 days. He didn't whine. He didn't curse and shake his fist at government action or inaction on health matters. He just ran his heart out in a fight against a deadly disease he believed could be defeated.

Ten months later I was at a Port Coquitlam hospital when Leslie Shepherd, a talented young reporter stationed outside Terry's room, sent me a pre-arranged signal. I fashioned her signal into a wire news service bulletin and sent it out to the world: Terry Fox was dead.

The story did not end there. Terry Fox's fight against cancer has raised nearly \$1 billion for cancer research in the past 40 years. That's money that has saved or prolonged many thousands of lives.

That's why it is heartbreaking to see the protesters mock the Terry Fox memorial near Parliament Hill, draping it with anti-vaccine signs and upside-down Maple Leaf flags.

Some were reported to have danced on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Most heartbreaking is that protests against COVID-19 precautions are prolonging the pandemic, overburdening hospitals and delaying cancer treatments Terry Fox ran so hard to have improved.

Some have called the convoy truckers and their supporters heroes. They are in fact anti-heroes who lack the courage, fierce determination and hope that shone from Terry Fox's eyes every step along his Marathon of Hope. They are the worst of the self-centred in an increasingly self-centred society.

"It took cancer to realize that being self-centered is not the way to live," Terry Fox once said. "The answer is to try and help others."

We are all tired of the pandemic and the restrictions it has placed on our lives.

Terry Fox was tired of being without a leg. Tired of months of cancer treatments. Tired of thoughts of dying.

But he refused to succumb to bellyaching and a "woe is me" attitude. He stood straight on his artificial leg and ran. Ran in a battle against a terrible disease. Ran to improve life for us all.

"I just wish people would realize that anything's possible if you try," he said. "Dreams are made possible if you try."

The truckers' convoy didn't bring dreams to Ottawa. They brought Nazi banners, Confederate flags, anger, hatred and other relics of American Trumpism.

This is a country that neither needs, nor wants Trumpism. It's a country that needs respectful protests, positive actions, much better leadership and appreciation of its heroes.

Terry Fox, the young man who refused to let disease consume his spirit, is a true Canadian hero whose memory deserves our utmost respect



Feathered friends

Ducks make use of the river on a sunny Wednesday morning. /Photo by Guenter Horst

letters to the editor

Road repair and resurfacing

To the Editor,

The following is an open letter to the councilors who decide on road repairs:

1: Please don't overfill potholes during repairs.

Unfortunately, road staff consistently overfill potholes with the result that dips become bumps. Bumps are unpleasant and hard on vehicles. From a safety viewpoint, bumps slow down fire and ambulance emergency vehicles. As well, avoidance of bumps on curves can cause accidents. Overfilling also wastes materials and tax dollars.

Whether through instruction/supervision and followup, or new methods/machinery, please ensure road staff fill potholes to leave behind a level surface.

2: Improve life expectancy of road resurfacing.

Our road, Soyers Lake Road, was regraded and resurfaced not long ago with such poor workmanship/materials/standards that it needs to be redone. The engineering report presented to council [Jan. 27] agreed that deterioration was severe enough to need resurfacing.

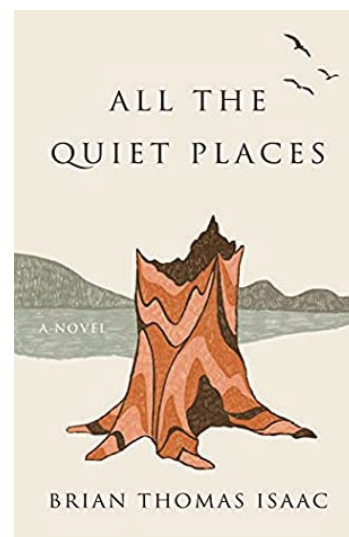
In my experience the lowest quality, least expensive solution is often the most expensive.

I would ask that council ask the engineers who presented the report to offer cost effective suggestions re: materials/quality control (in construction and maintenance), and expectations for longevity so that we could get long term guarantees from contractors that will do the work.

Your job is a difficult one. I thank you for your consideration.

Paul Zalan, MD
Minden

HCPL's Book of the Month - February



Brian Isaac's powerful debut novel *All the Quiet Places* is the coming-of-age story of Eddie Toma, an Indigenous (Syilx) boy, told through the young narrator's wide-eyed observations of the world around him.

It's 1956, and six-year-old Eddie Toma lives with his mother, Grace, and his little brother, Lewis, near the Salmon River on the far edge of the Okanagan Indian Reserve in the British Columbia Southern Interior. As Eddie grows and changes, so too do his life experiences, and the joys and hardships he navigates during each stage prove that Eddie's life is governed not by himself, but by the decisions of others around him.

All the Quiet Places is the story of what can happen when every adult in a person's life has been affected by colonialism. The acute separation from culture that can occur even at home in a loved, familiar landscape. It's a powerful narrative relying on the unguarded, unsentimental witness provided by a poignant and relatable main character. Check it out from HCPL today.

Epsom salts

CONSIDER EPSOM salts a miracle drug. It's not really a drug, or is it? One definition for the term drug is: a medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body. I can say from experience that Epsom salts has a healing effect when it comes to my body. A 20-minute soak in a hot bath infused with a minimum of two cups of Epsom salts is my answer to sore and aching muscles.

Epsom salt is a compound known as magnesium sulphate. Originally, these salts were found in Epsom, England in the late 1600's. Considered to be a folk remedy, Epsom salt is used to provide relief for a variety of conditions, including:

- sore muscles
- sprains
- itching from poison ivy
- sunburn
- stiff joints

Many years ago, when I was playing the game of squash on a regular basis, I would take Epsom salts baths to recover from the rigorous workouts. For me, it made a huge difference in reducing the time it took for my muscles to heal from the demands I had put on them.

Recently I managed to have a rather serious (and embarrassing) fall over a tractor blade. No, it was not moving but I was and I wasn't paying attention. The result was a major

scrape to my left shin with swelling that looked like a hot dog was shoved under the skin. I did ice the injury for a bit but then headed into a hot Epsom salts bath. The next morning I was way better than I thought I would be. While I'm not sure the Epsom salts helped my injury that much,



LAURIE SWEIG
Practical Fitness

I do believe that it helped relieve the stress my body experienced as a result of the fall. It's safe to say when something like that fall happens the entire body is affected. No doubt there was adrenaline pumping through my veins. Perhaps just having a bath would have made me feel better but I'd rather splurge and toss in some Epsom salts for good measure.

If you decide to try this remedy be sure to use a minimum of two cups of Epsom salts in a standard size bath tub of water. The water should be hot and the soaking time should be at least 20 minutes. If submerging yourself into a bath isn't your thing, a foot soak is another option. Half a cup of Epsom salts in a bucket of water for 10 - 20 minutes will do the trick.

Something to think about.

Laurie Sweig is a certified personal fitness trainer and spinning instructor. She owns and operates The Point for Fitness. She can be reached at laurie@thepointforfitness.com.

letters to the editor

Kindness matters

Dear friends and neighbours of Haliburton County,

The pandemic has been very hard on us all. Concern for our personal health and safety, as well as our loved ones, uncertainty about what lies ahead, and changing regulations – it has been a lot.

Through it all, healthcare workers (and many others in our community) have stepped up in countless ways. The incredible staff at HHHS have been making an 'all-hands-on-deck' effort for nearly two years, and even though they are absolutely exhausted, they keep showing up for our community, day in and day out.

As I've said in the past, the best way to support them is to follow public health measures – get vaccinated, get boosted, wear a mask in public spaces, reduce your contact, physical distance, and wash your hands.

I also need to ask that you help us create a safe and respectful workplace for our staff, and safe space for clients, family, volunteers, students, donors and visitors.

That means treating staff and others in our facilities with respect and dignity, not engaging in bullying or name calling, and remaining calm in your interactions. Any acts or threats of physical violence, disruptive behaviour, harassment or agreement will absolutely not be tolerated.

We also ask that you protect the privacy of our patients and staff by not taking photos, videos, or audio recordings in our facilities.

It has been a long two years, and we know everyone is tired. We must continue to put kindness first, look out for one another, and do all we can to keep each other healthy and safe.

Take care.

Carolyn Plummer
President and CEO
Haliburton Highlands Health Services

Ice on the river

The sun shines on a frosty Gull River on Jan. 26. /Photo by Guenter Horst



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New county tourism manager promotes four-season destination

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

Haliburton County's no longer just a summer cottage community; it's a four-season destination now and the timing has never been better to market it as such.

That's the message that new county tourism manager Tracie Bertrand wants to get out.

"We want to take those traditional visitors that are coming in that (summer) tourism season and create that sense of loyalty, so they visit in the winter and the fall and the spring," she said.

Bertrand started in her role in early January and will be tasked with helping Haliburton County carry out its Destination Development Plan, a plan that was written in 2019 with help from a Vancouver firm and suggested the region be marketed as a tourism destination in a more widespread fashion, with both the public and private sectors working together.

Her hiring is one step in a broader movement to build tourism and economic growth in the region. Scott Ovell, was recently hired to serve in a new county position, as director of economic development and tourism.

One of Ovell's first steps was to, in turn, hire Bertrand, as the new tourism manager. Having two people in leadership positions work on tourism is a change, as previously the county had one lone tourism director, Amanda Virtanen, who held the role for eight years before taking another job outside of the county last summer.

Bertrand brings a wealth of experience to the role. She was the director of tourism for Peterborough and the Kawartha Economic Development for five years. While there, she worked on marketing programs and initiatives designed to lure investments.

While the name "Peterborough" might make people think urban, she explained the organization was in the game of promoting rural tourism. She learned that, in Canada, and particularly in the Greater Toronto Area, people are very interested



Tracie Bertrand is the new tourism manager for Haliburton County./Submitted photo

in exploring rural regions. She believes areas like Haliburton County can compete for these visitors, just as much as other well-known cottage areas, like the Muskokas.

"People are looking for that authentic Canadian feel," she said. "Because of COVID, the restrictions, the component of being outside as much as possible has really shined a spotlight on rural Ontario destinations. That was there before but now it's in full demand."

Bertrand has spent most of her life in the Kawartha region and has a diploma in business administration and marketing from Fleming College. She describes herself as a "country" girl, as she, her husband and two teenaged daughters love being outside enjoying activities such as fishing and hunting.

She said that, since starting her role, she has been meeting

“

We want to take those traditional visitors that are coming in that (summer) tourism season and create that sense of loyalty, so they visit in the winter and the fall and the spring,

— TRACIE BERTRAND

”

with other people connected to the tourism industry, to get to know them and their thoughts on how tourism in the region can be promoted.

"My first task is to be a visitor; look at this place through the eyes of a visitor; get out as much as I can, meet and see as many of the stakeholders and businesses as much as I can," she explained.

She said the county has data which is showing that its growth rate is ahead of Canada's overall growth rate. As Haliburton County is becoming less of a secret to the rest of the country, there's tremendous opportunity to build on growth.

"Before we'd have to market like crazy to get people to come here; now we don't have to," she said. "We know the demand is here but we need to capitalize on it."

Health unit hopes to resume halted services soon

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

The local health unit hopes to resume some of its services in the coming months, if the Omicron variant wanes.

The Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District health unit's school-based immunization program has been on and off since the start of the pandemic, but the unit intends to resume it by May.

Also, the unit's sexual health clinic, which has been off since the fall, may start in April.

However, several other important programs will remain off for the time being, such as food handler training programs, and sexual health education programs in schools.

The health unit is also awaiting direction from the Ministry of Health on whether it can resume oral health screening programs in schools by March or April.

The news was delivered by medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking in a presentation to Haliburton County councillors at their Jan. 26 virtual meeting.

The presentation was to give an overview of the full scope of the health unit's services. The pandemic has put public

health services under a much bigger spotlight, Bocking said. The health unit has been thrust into running COVID vaccine clinics and other pandemic-related tasks, but, eventually it will have to resume many of its traditional services, which have been limited due to shutdowns and staff being deployed to work on more pressing emergencies.

"At the height of each of the waves, I would estimate that 80 per cent of our resources have been dedicated to COVID response," Bocking said, explaining that work is mostly related to contact tracing and running vaccine clinics.

The daunting new challenges have led to new financial pressures. The unit's 2022 budget included a five per cent increase on the municipal tax levy and Haliburton County taxpayers now contribute to \$535,352 to the unit (additional money has also come from provincial taxpayers).

"We continue to be surprised by COVID and what it continues to bring," Bocking said. "We've had to try and have multiple contingency plans."

Bocking said the health unit now must find a way to resume services and catch up for lost time, but still have plans in place for staff to be re-deployed elsewhere, if necessary, because "COVID-19 is not going anywhere."

"We have areas that need significant catch up dedication.

There's a huge cohort of children who have not had preventative oral health screening. We know that childhood immunizations are behind .. it's going to take several years to catch up."



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Tracker, the German shepherd, is on an underdog journey

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

You could call it an ultimate underdog story.

Or, as Kristyn Begbie and David Hutnyk both say, it's a one-in-a-million, beat-the-odds type of journey.

Tracker, a German shepherd, appears about to embark on a career as a security dog, just months after being rehabilitated at Minden's Snowflake Meadows Rescue.

"This never happens," said Snowflake Meadows owner Kristyn Begbie. "It's a one-in-a-million (story)."

In a separate interview, Hutnyk, who now cares for Tracker as part of his business K9ine Security, called the dog a "one-in-a-million find."

They both say Tracker's story is a remarkable reminder of how love and determination can make a difference in an animal's life and why it's important to never give up on a dog. Or, as Hutnyk said, it's a reminder of how "every dog has its day."

Tracker came to Snowflake Meadows mid last year. A friend of Begbie's in Durham region knew about the dog and convinced its owners to allow her to take him to the rescue centre. Tracker was believed to be about 15 months old at the time. Begbie said that, at the time, Tracker was skinny, with his ribs showing and he had fleas. She believes he spent much of his early life chained up and was not well socialized.

"We fixed him up and I let him decompress," she said.

In time, she started to realize that Tracker was not like other dogs. She described him as "confident" and full of potential. When she enrolled him in obedience training, "he



David Hutnyk is pictured with Tracker, a new member of the K9ine Security team./Submitted photo

thrived. He loved it."

As Tracker got ready for adoption, Begbie posted about his progress on social media. The posts caught the eye of Hutnyk.

K9ine Security, based in Port Hope, is a business that searches for rescue dogs and trains them to work in security. The business

has clients throughout Ontario and much of its work occurs in the Greater Toronto Area.

Hutnyk said the business responds to alarm calls, provides event security and other private tasks. Their dogs serve as "visual deterrents" but are also trained for search and rescue and to sniff out contraband. They sometimes work with police units, too.

Like Begbie, Hutnyk noted that Tracker had a rare sense of "confidence" and was quick to pick up on training commands.

He said when he looks for dogs, he's looking for those who are not aggressive and do not have anxiety issues. Tracker seemed to be a good fit. He had what Hutnyk described as a large "prey drive" meaning his nose was always to the ground.

He adopted Tracker in November and, as he sped through training, it was becoming more and more apparent that the dog had special gifts.

"He showed intelligence and a willingness to please and that's a huge asset," Hutnyk said.

And that confidence continued to shine. During one day of training, "he climbed an open fire escape on the side of a building without hesitation. I've never seen another dog do that."

While Tracker's training is not complete, Hutnyk said that he has no doubt that the dog is about to have a long career working at K9ine Security, where he'll be kept in good health and cared for.

Like human workers, security dogs have to go through a combination of off duty and on-the-job training, Hutnyk said. So far, Tracker is passing the test. On New Year's Eve, Hutnyk had Tracker working in a busy area of Toronto and "he wasn't freaking out. He was just watching people ... It was a good test for him; he's an incredible dog." Hutnyk knows that Tracker's success story is rare, because his business specializes in working with rescue dogs. He opts to not purchase pre-trained dogs, because his goal is to find rescue dogs and, hopefully, give them a better life.

"With that, there's a lot of challenges," he said. "As much as we like a good success story, not everyone meets the challenges



Tracker lunges forward during a training exercise./Submitted photo

that we need." He said the odds of a dog turning out like Tracker after such a tough start to his early life is "very slim."

But Tracker seemed destined for this type of work.

Begbie said she had many families with young children that were interested in adopting Tracker, but they just didn't seem like the right fit, perhaps because of his earlier life.

"He was super duper friendly with everyone he met but if you moved quickly or cornered him, he had a look to him where he was leery," she said.

Yet, that characteristic – and his incredible desire to please – matched well with what Hutnyk needed.

He said the profession of training security dogs comes with "big risk and there's a big margin of error. But there's also a big reward, especially if you get a dog like Tracker."

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Canoe FM announcer Patrick Monaghan is a testament to radio, having aired his 300th Buckslide Blues Cruise Show. The weekly show, which runs every Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., has been a driving force for him since being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. / DARREN LUM Staff

Host of Blues Cruise derives joy from each show

by **DARREN LUM**
Times Staff

Life. It's not something Patrick Monaghan takes for granted.

The radio announcer of the popular, award-winning Buckslide Blues Cruise show just celebrated his 300th show last week. It was a milestone he didn't know he would make, having been told he wasn't going to live until Christmas because of the pancreatic cancer he's endured for the last few years.

Right before going live last Tuesday at 7 p.m., he said, "I shut my eyes for a few seconds before I hit the button and I just said, be professional."

There was a proverbial exhale for the radio announcer with that show, he said.

"It was almost a breath of relief. The anxiety is gone ... it was a real challenge to get to 300," he said.

Monaghan's passion for music, particularly the blues is palpable and evident by how he sings along with the music during his show

at the community radio station, located on Maple Avenue across from the A.J. LaRue Arena. He was recognized for his efforts he puts towards each of his weekly shows held Tuesdays from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. with the Best Jazz or Blues Music Show by the National Campus and Community Radio Association in 2020.

He said reaching 300 is on equal footing with winning that award.

"They're both up there. Oh, they're both up there," he said.

His message to his listeners was thank you.

"I'm very grateful for all the people in my life that have come out to help and then make things so much easier," he said.

Monaghan said his life with cancer has been challenging and this show will continue to give him purpose.

"Going forward, I have a reason to get up in the morning and then work away at shows and it's not just all the medical appointments. So, it's really been a lifeblood for me," he said. "When I push that button [to go live] I'm okay for a couple of hours."

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Barred owl in Lutterworth.
/Photo by Andy Sauter



Snapping turtle on Davis Lake Road. /Photo by Andy Sauter

Andy Sauter nurtures natural curiosity with wildlife photography

by **SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

It has only been in the last few years that Andy Sauter has revisited a longtime interest in photography and camera equipment, but in doing so he has ensured his days in retirement are fulfilling.

“It’s a rewarding discovery,” he told the *Times* of his passion, which he said has enabled him to connect with nature, capture beautiful wildlife photos and in turn improve his mental health.

Andy is not new to the area, having been a year-round cottager in Miner’s Bay with his wife Cathy for approximately 30 years but in recent years he’s learning to explore his surroundings more.

As an engineer in supervision and project management of large construction projects, he said work hours were long, and he travelled a lot, opting to work until he was about 70.

He’d had an interest in photography in his mid-20s, and bought his first camera then – a Canon SLR – noting that photography wasn’t user-friendly in the 70s. With a young family and a busy job, he couldn’t devote much time to photography then, so he didn’t pursue it.

“Fast forward 40 years later, and I started to plan for a retirement hobby other than the extensive wood working or building and metal projects that I was always involved,” he said. “I liked golfing and tennis but I need something more during the pandemic. Most importantly for me, I always needed the technical stimulation to keep my brain challenged with something new. I did not want to simply keep doing the same thing regardless of how good I was at it, during my retirement.”

In Florida, about three years ago, Andy said he captured photos of a snake – which he got rather close to during the impromptu photo session. Researching the snake online after taking the photos led Andy to realize it’s one of Florida’s most venomous snakes, a story he likes to share now that he’s not so close to it.

At home in Ontario, he said there wasn’t as much wildlife to capture.

“Last winter, I was driving around looking for a blue jay and looking for birds, and



Andy Sauter has taken up hobby photography during the pandemic, which he has found to help him get outdoors and have improved mental health. /Photo submitted

I came across the barred owl, my highlight,” he said. “Then I started noticing that other people had feeders.”

Now, Andy has three feeders and regularly buys bags of peanuts.

“Rather than driving around looking for them, I can actually sit there with a coffee and watch these birds,” he said, noting he’ll also walk in parks and stop at the side of the road to look for moments with wildlife.

As throughout his life, Andy is always learning and following his natural curiosity.

“What I found out, I’ve read seven or eight books now, the differences between a male and a female bird, and the colours between them, and what they eat – it’s just kind of gone over the top,” he said. “I find myself every day, probably five days out of the week spending about two-and-a-half hours either on birding, or photography or a combination of both, or going on my computer and just looking at the other pictures.”



A female monarch butterfly. /Photo by Andy Sauter

Andy said his hobby has led to him exploring the technical aspects of camera and photography accessories and has also caused him to learn more about wildlife and the environment.

“I’ve been reading about other wildlife photographers,” he said. “You actually have to plan the location, study what birds will be there, and go at the golden hour – early in the morning or late at night. You’ve got to study the area, and find out what kind of birds go there. And then you’ve got to plant yourself.”

Oftentimes, he said, the photo he gets isn’t as important as the experience he’s had to take it.

“It’s just a continuous journey and a continuous learning opportunity,” he said. “You can’t get bored, because there’s more to learn about that bird, or there’s other birds, or different birds at different times.”

And then, of course, there’s turtles, he laughs.

Having taken a photo of a snapping turtle one day, he returned home to learn about the other turtles that live in Ontario and challenged himself to find and photograph each of them. He also began looking for waterfalls while he was in different towns, and seeking them out throughout the province.

Andy said he appreciates seeing other people share their photos in the paper, and hopes others might consider it as a hobby, even with their phone if camera equipment isn’t accessible.

“It’s important for other people to try and explore ... it may have been a spark a long time ago, but maybe you should reignite that spark, or that interest, or enthusiasm, particularly during this pandemic,” he said. “It’s been an experience that’s been a rewarding and eternal journey for me. And there’s no destination in mind because it’s going to go on for quite some time. I don’t ever see myself getting bored with this.”

Opportunity for businesses to enhance digital marketing

by **DARREN LUM**
Times Staff

An upcoming workshop is looking to help businesses stand out in the 21st century with a series of “how to” digital marketing workshops.

Organized by the County of Haliburton Economic Development and Tourism department, this free offering for Haliburton County business owners and entrepreneurs goes beyond most general social media workshops and offers targeted, applicable coaching on very specific social media skills said the tourism department’s content creator Thom Lambert.

He said digital marketing is an affordable and effective way for businesses and organizations to communicate with their customers and stakeholders.

“Because of the ease with which content can be shared, it is also one of the most effective ways for businesses within an area like the Haliburton Highlands to collaborate with one another. Social media platforms continue to be one of the most important tools by which potential visitors to the Haliburton Highlands discover new experiences and make travel decisions,” he wrote in a prepared statement.

There are four workshops, offered bi-weekly starting on Feb. 3. Interested business owners, entrepreneurs, and digital marketing workers can register by contacting Lambert at tlambert@haliburtoncounty.ca, or by registering directly through links posted on social media.

The first workshop is focusing on creating and posting Instagram reels, one of the



Autumn Wilson will lead a series of free digital marketing how-to workshops for Haliburton County business owners and entrepreneurs beginning Feb. 3. Four workshops, held via Zoom, will offer targeted, applicable coaching on very specific social media skills.
/Photo submitted

fastest growing segments of social media. Workshops will be up to 60 minutes long and will include time for participants to ask questions at the end. Each workshop is focused on one topic. The free series is made possible with funding from the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization through their Tourism Recovery and Innovation Program.

The workshops will be offered via Zoom and are being facilitated by local marketing expert Autumn Wilson, who is the owner of AJW services.

Lambert wrote Wilson “provides social

media marketing, training and consulting. She is the past program and operations co-ordinator for Haliburton County Development Corporation, and past business manager for the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce.”

Wilson said the best attribute of digital marketing for rural businesses is authenticity.

“In order to see success on social media, brands (businesses) need to show the people behind the business. Consumers are demanding connection. This is something that has become more prevalent since the pandemic

with an increase in people turning to social media to find a sense of connection and community,” she wrote in an email message. “Consumers are looking to build meaningful relationships with the brands they follow. They want to know who they are, what they like, what their vision is, what their goals are, etc. The best thing a brand can do is to be true and authentic to who they are as a person so they build relationships with their audience.”

Wilson has been assisting area businesses for the past six years with their social media strategies, teaching people “the ins and outs” of how social media can lead to business growth and sales.

“There has been growing support from the county tourism department to help businesses improve their digital marketing so we’ve seen a lot of improvements over the years. The ongoing work to expand broadband connection in the county over the last 10 years has also made it easier for rural businesses to have a presence online,” she wrote.

The ever-changing characteristic trait of social media adds to the challenge.

“Consumers are using it in different ways and new platforms emerge all the time. Keeping up with those trends and figuring out which ones to implement for your business can be really challenging. The way to improve is to be dialed in to your target audience - knowing what they like, where they are, what they’re doing, and what they are engaging with online. You don’t want to jump on a new platform or a new trend just because it’s there. You want to make sure that’s where your target audience is before determining how you can use it for your business,” she wrote.

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Volunteers needed to help bring Memories to Life

If you enjoy the company of seniors and are a good listener then we want to hear from you! SIRCH Community Services is re-launching a program aimed at supporting seniors with memory loss or early stage dementia through the creation of a scrapbook filled with their life stories.

Memories to Life was first developed and piloted by SIRCH over 10 years ago. The success of the pilot was undeniable, however, until this year, funding was not available. Recently an anonymous donor funded SIRCH to reinstate this valuable program, set to launch in March.

SIRCH executive director, Gena Robertson, is excited about the possibilities this program can bring to isolated seniors who are looking for connection, companionship and a supporter who can help bring their legacy to life.

"Research shows that social isolation is associated with about a 50 per cent increased risk of dementia, as well as speeding the cognitive decline," Robertson said. "Memory loss can create profound sadness and grief at the loss of the life as you know it. It may affect self-esteem and create depression or anxiety, especially during COVID. Memories to Life is about providing connection and a sense of value."

Memories to Life is designed to help seniors with memory loss remember and document their accomplishments, their history and the people who have been important in their lives, and give them a sense of pride, belonging and recognition of their impact on the world. As memory loss progresses the memory books will provide family members and friends with a way of communicating and reassuring the person with dementia, as memory and ability to communicate decreases.

Prior to the program launch this March, SIRCH is looking for volunteers and participants to partake in this new initiative. Volunteers will be supervised by SIRCH's new senior wellness co-ordinator, Jan Saugh.

"Volunteers can be any age, but need to be able to listen and be non-judgmental. Our volunteers will be matched with someone following training, factoring in things like location and interests, etc.," said Saugh. "Volunteers should be able to commit two to four hours each week. Ideally, each volunteer will help two to three clients over a one-year period."

If you think you would be a good fit for this program, either as a participant or a volunteer, or if you want to learn more about it we encourage you to contact SIRCH. Selected volunteers will go through a three to four day orientation and training process prior to the start of the program, and will



SIRCH's new senior wellness co-ordinator, Jan Saugh, is looking for volunteers and participants to help launch Memories to Life, a program that helps seniors living with dementia create a scrapbook of their life. The program will provide training to volunteers and pair them with participants. Those interested in volunteering or participating can contact SIRCH. /Photo submitted

meet regularly to share ideas and resources.

Robertson is grateful for the wonderful donation that brought Memories to Life back. "We are so thankful. The donors want no recognition – they just want to support this

community. Wow!"

Those interested in volunteering or participating can contact Jan Saugh, co-ordinator for senior wellness by emailing jan_saugh@sirch.on.ca or call 705-457-1742.



Peek-a-Boo Moose

"Here's [left] one of my favourite images of the cow moose that visited us [south of Haliburton Village close to Koshlong Lake]," said June Krisko, a local artist and photographer. "She stayed for a couple of hours. It was -20 outside, so I didn't stay out that long." June's work is available at SIRCH Bistro and Marketplace, Castle Antiques, Rails End Gallery and Organic Times locations in Haliburton and Minden. In the second week of February, she'll be the Artist Spotlight at SIRCH marketplace. For more info visit www.junekrisko.com. /Photo submitted by June Krisko

Sweet treat for Special Olympics fundraising

by **SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

A limited edition chocolate cake doughnut with white fondant, coloured sprinkles and whipped topping tasted good, but also helped support the Haliburton County Red Wolves with a fundraising and awareness campaign.

Special Olympics Canada partnered with Tim Hortons to create a limited edition #ChoosetoInclude doughnut, which was available from January 28 to 30.

“The need for funding to help our community prepare for the safe return to sport for Special Olympics athletes and volunteers is urgent,” said Sharon Bollenbach, CEO, Special Olympics Canada. “People with intellectual disabilities have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and limited access to social and physical activities have played a major role in the challenges our community is facing.”

The doughnuts were sold for \$1.69 plus tax, with 100 per cent of the proceeds from sales of the doughnut directly supporting Special Olympics community programs and more than 41,000 athletes with an intellectual disability across Canada. Special Olympics is a grassroots movement organizing sport to empower individuals, change attitudes and build communities.

Some of the Haliburton County Red Wolves athletes, coaches, family and friends got a taste of the doughnut for a good cause.



Left, Alyssa Whitaker and Kim Buie share doughnuts for two.



Above, Skylar Pratt with her decked out doughnut.



Rick and Donna West can't wait for a photo before diving in.



Brodie Nason and Jacob Clark enjoy some fresh air with their baked goods.



Dawn Piercey looks pleased as punch with her treat.



Trevor and Gunther share a visit and a doughnut.



GET TO KNOW THE HUSKIES: NATHAN PORTER

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

In his fourth season in the OJHL (Ontario Junior Hockey League), Nathan Porter has been a staple member of the Huskies leadership team. Spending two seasons in Pickering and two seasons with the Whitby Fury/Haliburton County Huskies, Porter has amassed a total of 51 points (16 goals and 35 assists) in his career. The first ever captain in Huskies history has come a long way since his humble beginnings.

Porter has been a hockey guy his whole life, the sport being in his blood. His father, a defenceman, got him skating at a very young age. Since then he has fallen in love with the sport.

“I’ve been a hockey guy and my dad is a defenceman,” Porter mentioned. “He grew me up with skates, we’d always have a backyard rink. I’m from Whitby so I’m fortunate that hockey is very well known there, it wasn’t very hard for me to lace up the skates.”

Starting out in AAA with the Whitby Wildcats, Porter was teammates with current Huskies player Christian Stevens as well as 2020 Winnipeg Jets 10th overall pick Cole Perfetti. Graduating to the OJHL, Porter put up 10 points in his first season and 11 in his second. Moving to Whitby for 2019, Porter put up 19 points and was named to the 2020 CJHL (Canadian Junior Hockey League) Prospects Game. Although his first three seasons might not have been as good he wanted, it was still a great time in his eyes.


“I played with some really good guys in Pickering,” Porter said. “One of my teammates there was actually drafted to the Boston Bruins. In 2020, I was part of the CJHL Prospects Game which was really fun. We didn’t have much success there, never making it out of the first round. However, I think that will change this year with Haliburton County.”

Remaining with the Fury after the decision to relocate to the Minden, Porter was ecstatic about the fan support in the county. Playing in front of an empty barn is never fun, but for Porter seeing the jerseys and merchandise in the crowd is something that is surreal to him but more than welcome.

When he came to the county, coach Ryan Ramsay made the decision to name Porter the first captain in team history. Being the first time in his OJHL career that he ever wore a



Nathan Porter, the first captain in the Haliburton County Huskies history, chose his jersey number based on his family history - his dad's number was also 77. / Photo submitted



PUBLIC NOTICE
Applicant: Williams
Lot 12, Concession 5
Geographic Township of Stanhope

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, in the geographic Township of Stanhope, in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, County of Haliburton, to be surplus.

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands proposes to enact a By-Law to stop-up, close and convey to the abutting property owner(s) that part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, described as all and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Geographic Township of Stanhope, in the County of Haliburton and being composed of the following:

FIRSTLY: THAT part of the Original Shore Road Allowance in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, described as Part 2 on a Plan deposited in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of Haliburton County as Plan 19R-10582.

The proposed By-Law will come before the said Council for consideration at its regular meeting at the Algonquin Highlands Municipal Office, 1123 North Shore Road, on **the 17th day of February, 2022** and at that time, the Council will hear in person or by his/her counsel, solicitor or agent any person who claims that his/her land will be prejudicially affected and who applies to be heard. Any person who wishes to be heard by Council regarding this proposed closure must contact the Clerk to schedule a delegation with Council.

Dated: February 2nd, 2022

Sean O’Callaghan
 Planner
 Township of Algonquin Highlands
 1123 North Shore Rd.
 Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1J1
 Tel: (705) 489-2379
 Email: socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

letter, Porter has made the most of the leadership responsibilities that come along with the title.

“It’s a dream come true for me to have a letter,” continued Porter. “I’ve been around the league for a while and I

know Ryan and myself get along really well. Being there for the younger guys and being their role model is really fun. You’re always the first one to hear it from the coach after a bad game, but you have a lot of good pressure on you. Guys look to you for what to do next, you got a lot of eyes on your back but it’s been a lot of fun so far.”

With the OJHL coming back after a brief shutdown in January as well as missing the entire 2020-21 season, the players in the league have had it extremely tough. All these players want to do is just be on the ice and with the pandemic it hasn’t been easy. However, the team is very close-knit and during the shutdown the guys managed to find many ways to keep themselves sane and occupied during this time.

“Being up here in Haliburton, it’s not too hard to find some ice,” Porter continued. “You can walk out to the lake, shovel it off and play a few hours outside. We’ve been gaming, and working out when we can. It’s been tough but being insuch a great community, it’s been a lot of help.”

Porter wears No.77 on the ice, and that number carries a lot of meaning. A lot of players choose their numbers off of players they look up to, but for Porter he chose his based off of his family.

“My dad grew up playing with it,” Porter said. “When I made a team I had to pick No.4 because 77 was taken. So this season, Ryan called me up and told me that I could change my jersey number. It’s my last year so I wanted to end it where it started and I picked 77.”

Being from Whitby, Porter’s family does their best to attend as many games as they can. Usually coming once or twice a week, and occasional away games. The support from his family has been a big help for Porter this season.

After the OJHL, Porter hasn’t decided 100 per cent what he wants to do with his career. There are a few options he is considering such as playing hockey for an American university in the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) NCAA Division III or playing hockey for a Canadian university in U Sports in Canada, keeping all the opportunities open.

Regardless of what he does, Porter knows hockey will be in his life in some way. The sport has given him so much and he will never let that go, as the season gets back underway look for Porter to be leading the team to the playoffs.



NOTICE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS
2022 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS

NOTE: As a result of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, as well as the requirements for social distancing, Council Meetings will be conducted electronically via web conference until further notice.

TAKE NOTICE that Council will begin its 2022 budget deliberations during a **Special Meeting on Wednesday, February 16, 2022** commencing at 9:00 a.m. conducted electronically via web conference.

Council will continue its 2022 Budget Deliberations during its Regular Council Meeting being held on Thursday, February 17, 2022.

If required, Council will continue its 2022 budget deliberations during a **Special Meeting on Tuesday, February 22, 2022** commencing at 9:00 a.m. conducted electronically via web conference.

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link. The live-stream links can be accessed on the published Council Meeting Agendas found on the Township’s website at <https://algonquinhighlands.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/200688>

Dated this 3rd day of February, 2022.

Dawn Newhook, Municipal Clerk
 Township of Algonquin Highlands
 1123 North Shore Road
 Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1J1
 T: (705) 489-2379 x333
 E: dnewhook@algonquinhighlands.ca



Snowshoe Snowdon


Rick Whittaker, left, guides Lena Fontaine, left in grey, Pauline Gillroy, middle in blue, Duncan Campbell, second from the right in red, Elisha Weiss, far right in blue, and others off-trail at Snowdon Park. Present but not shown are Randy Moratz, Liz Campbell, Lesley Webb, Vince Cosentino, Kathy Sutcliffe, and Katie Hutchinson. Snowshoe Snowdon was the first in a series of three snowshoeing events happening in and around Minden's parks. The next event will be at Dahl Forest on Feb. 14, followed by a hike at the Minden White Water Preserve on Feb. 28. For more information visit mindenhills.ca. /NICK BERNARD Staff



Left, trail guide Rick Whittaker points out features on the map posted at Snowdon Park in Minden before leading a guided hike through the park.



“Snowshoe Snowdon,” the first of three guided snowshoe hikes offered by the township of Minden Hills was held Jan. 31.



Township of Algonquin Highlands

Notice Of

**Electronic Public
Open House**

Concerning A General Review Of
Comprehensive Zoning By-Law 03-22

The Township of Algonquin Highlands will hold an Electronic Open House with respect to a proposed update to By-law 03-22, which is the Comprehensive Zoning By-law for the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

The Electronic Open House will provide the public, and all interested parties with an opportunity to review the proposed Zoning By-law policies, mapping and illustrations and to ask questions and make comment on the proposed Zoning By-law. The Electronic Open House is scheduled for:

Date:	Thursday February 24th, 2022
Time:	Electronic Open House: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location:	Public Open House will take place in Electronic Format only

Electronic Participation

The Electronic Public Open House will be held through Electronic Participation only. For more information about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, please contact the Township Planner at socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

Members of the Public Wishing to Watch the Meeting can do so by joining the live-stream link, available on the Township's website on the day of the meeting: <https://www.algonquinhighlands.ca/index.php>

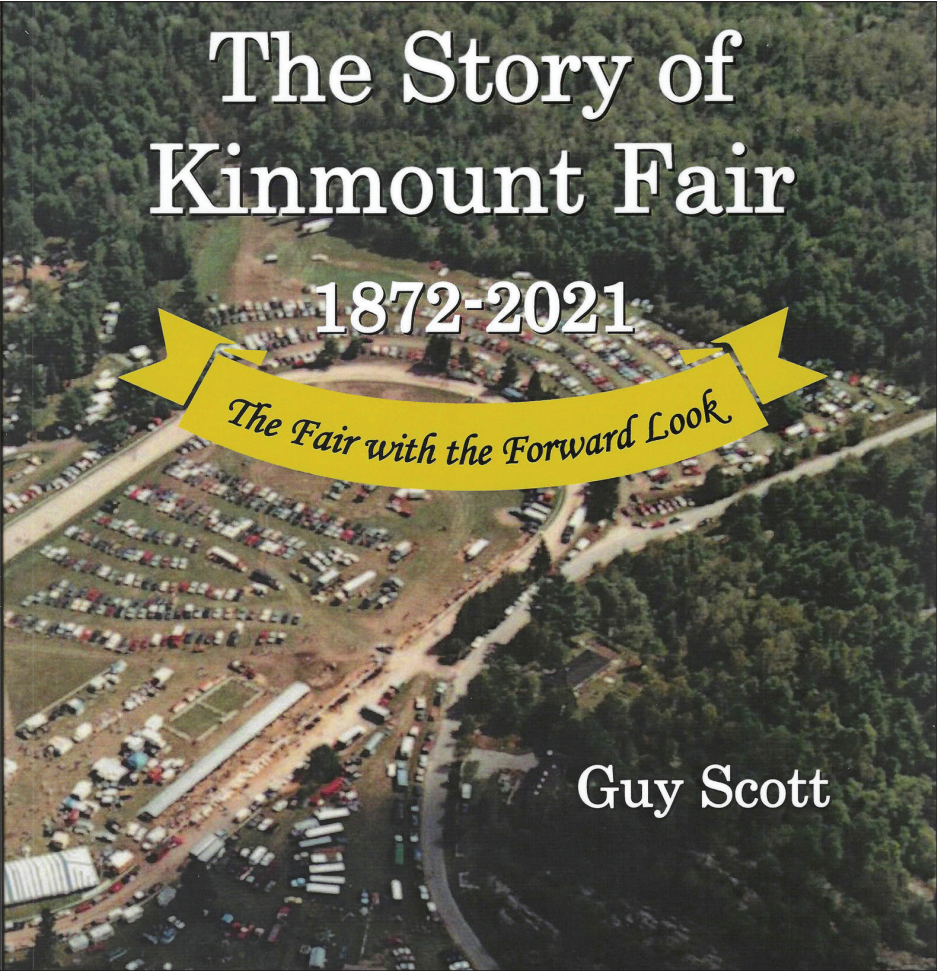
Members of the Public Wishing to Participate and Make Comment/Speak at the Meeting regarding the proposed Zoning By-law update are required to pre-register by emailing socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca before 3:00 pm on February 21st, 2022.

Additional information and material related to the Zoning By-law review, including a copy of the draft by-law and proposed mapping schedules, can be found on the Township's new public engagement platform "Let's Connect Algonquin Highlands!" at: <https://letsconnectalgonquinhighlands.ca/>. The website will continue to be updated as information becomes available.

For more information about the Zoning By-law Review process, you may also contact:

Sean O'Callaghan, Planner
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1J1
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Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 20

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

One of Kinmount's most precious jewels is the Kinmount Fair and its beautiful fairgrounds.

I'll never forget my total amazement the first time I witnessed the wonder of the Kinmount Fair back in 1986. I had just moved to Kinmount.

"How on earth, did this small village produce such a grand event?" I wondered.

The answer is volunteers. Kinmount is blessed with them.

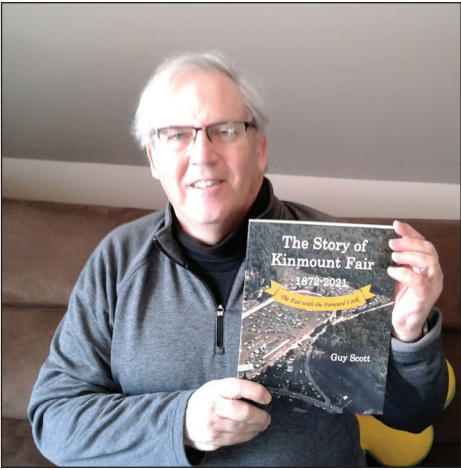
Since 1872, volunteers have brought forth the magic of the fair that transforms the tiny village of Kinmount into a miraculous place to be. No wonder the slogan is "The Fair with the Forward Look." Thousands upon thousands look forward to returning each year, me being one of them.

To the disappointment of these multitudes, the fair was cancelled for the past two years due to the pandemic, but this year the show must go on! And what a show it promises to be.

The 2022 Fair celebrates 150 years of the Kinmount Fair with extra special attractions and celebrations that go above and beyond.

In fact, one such celebration is now available. Guy Scott's new book, *The Story of Kinmount Fair*. The dedication reads, "This book is dedicated to the many volunteers who poured their hearts into making Kinmount Fair a success for the past 150 years." Lucky me. I've got my copy already!

Full of history and photos with plenty of smiles and great memories made at the fair, the book is available at Kinmount Artisan's Marketplace for \$28 or e-mail info@kinmountfair.net. The Marketplace is in the lower level of Kinmount Community Centre at the intersection of County Road 121 and County Road 45. Hours of operation are



Guy Scott with his 128-page look at 150 years of the Kinmount Fair. The book, *The Story of Kinmount Fair*, is available at Kinmount Artisan's Marketplace from Friday to Sunday. / Photo submitted

Fridays to Sundays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact them at 705-488-1414 or on their Facebook page.

Another special celebration for Kinmount Fair's sesquicentennial is the creation of three murals commissioned by the Kinmount Agricultural Society. The series of murals commemorate the history of the fair in three eras. For a sneak peak, photos of all three murals may be found in Guy's book.

So, mark your calendars for Labour Day Weekend, Sept. 2, 3, and 4, 2022, and come out to enjoy and celebrate Kinmount Fair's 150th Anniversary. I can't wait! Hope to see you at the fair!

By Lynne Kilby

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GENERATIONS

Warm up to winter with EarlyON

Are you looking for some inspiration, activities and connections for your family during these chilly, winter months?

We are hoping to resume in-person programs again soon, but in the meantime we are offering some creative ways to add fun to snowy days! Our January “Winter Wonderland” photo activity has provided weekly ideas for outdoor adventures, such as building an upside-down snowman, creating colourful frozen hands and shapes, or painting the snow using food dye. Another challenge focused on nature – what animals or their tracks could be seen outside? Families were invited to send their photos to be posted on our Facebook page, and be entered into a draw for a gift basket at the end of the month. We love the pictures that are being shared!

Another way we connected with families during January was our Family Literacy Day mail-out – more than 130 families in Haliburton County and CKL signed up for a free literacy package mailed to their door. It included a book, literacy information, and ideas to celebrate the annual day on Jan. 27. Children love getting a package in the mail, and parents appreciate the tips and supplies. Stay tuned for a science mail-out coming in March, all about the five senses.

In February we will be asking families to

share their photos once again, as part of a Family Cooking Challenge. Leading up to the Family Day Holiday on February 21, parents and children are encouraged to do some cooking together. It could be a simple snack or a favourite meal, it’s all about spending time together and fostering healthy food choices. Children learn many skills while cooking too – following directions, measuring ingredients, using tools – all while having fun and making memories. We will post the submitted pictures, create a digital cookbook with the recipes, and there will be another draw for prizes!

We continue to offer daily Zoom programs as well, so if you want to sing, dance, laugh, hear a story, or just talk with other families or our staff, please join us!

Look for more information, our Zoom program schedule or fun activities and videos on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/oeyc.haliburtonvictoriabrock, website at www.oeyc.ca; or call us at 705-324-7900, we love to connect with families!

*Julie Bosker
Program Coordinator
EarlyON Child and Family Centre
Minden and Haliburton*



Fun in the snow

Callum and his mom Camille Fildey of Minden created this outdoor snow structure, for a Winter Wonderland activity suggested by the EarlyON Child and Family Centre. For more ideas on creative fun outdoors, see the Generations page. /Submitted by Camille Fildey



In-person programs weren't able to happen in January, but EarlyON staff offered some creative ways to add fun to snowy days at home.



Water and food dye poured into disposable gloves and hung on the line to freeze.



A friendly colourful wave of hands gestures hello from the snow.



The EarlyON's January “Winter Wonderland” photo activity provided weekly ideas for outdoor adventures, such as building an upside-down snowman, creating colourful frozen hands and shapes, or painting the snow using food dye.

AROUND THE COUNTY TOWN

Good kids

Baylen Taylor and Holly, wait patiently for any treats that might drop from above, on Jan. 23 in their Minden backyard. /Photo by Kelly Taylor



Sweet, solo sparrow

"This sweet little sparrow has been sitting solo on our feeding platform eating the millet through this -25/-30 degrees night stretch. We've never had an American tree sparrow through the winter since we moved from Dwight to Algonquin Highlands in 2008. The dark-eyed juncos have stayed too — in much larger numbers. We have quite a large junco flock we've been feeding, but they really enjoy the standing seeds we've left in our wild diversity gardens over the processed seed. Feb. 2 is the day when birds start to become excited again. Expect to see more action and hear more song at the feeder. Nuthatches and chickadees are getting ready to breed and nest right now. Helps me get through this last half of winter. Hope it helps you too." /Photo submitted by Botanigal Dorset/Rebecca Krawczyk



Pausing for the photo

"I was coming back from the Wee Store in West Guilford. I always go across Green Lake Road to Stanhope Airport Road, when all a sudden I Saw IT! Got out of my truck and took the picture! I find that taking winter pictures are beautiful, so clean and crisp against the snow." /Photo by Jan Graham



Fresh air friends

Whitby residents Jean, Kathy and Al have been visiting the area for more than 20 years. "The trails and the weather were perfect for them and they marvelled at the beauty," said Jessie Pflug, who posted this photo on the Stouffer Mill Bed and Breakfast Facebook page on Jan. 26. / Photo submitted by Jessie Pflug

To see your loved ones on this page, send photos to sue@haliburtonpress.com

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A Celebration of Ken's Life will be held at a later date. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



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Having a ball

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12



Gramma wins again

Margaret Ross, better known as Gramma, reclaims her title as the champion of the Minden Winterfest Chili Competition and signs her name to the winner's apron on Feb. 20. See more photos on page 5. Photo by Angelica Blenich

Pool discussion premature: AH council

Chad Ingram
Staff reporter

Algonquin Highlands councillors found discussion of a public county pool premature at their Feb. 17 meeting.

At that meeting, councillors discussed a submission from Minden Hills Reeve Barb Reid, suggesting the county proceed with a market demand feasibility study for a pool, the contract for which Reid suggested be awarded to Toronto's LeisurePlan International Inc., the company the YMCA uses for such studies.

The study would be done in the form of a phone survey and cost \$35,000 and the YMCA has expressed interest in being involved in the project.

"It might be getting ahead of our-

see SOLE-SOURCING page 2

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